NUMB. LIX.

The GUARDIAN.

Sic Honor & nomen Divinis Vatibus, atque Carminibus venit. —— Hor.

Tuesday, May 19. 1713.

THE Tragedy of *Cato* has encreaſed the number of my Correſpondents, but none of 'em can take it ill that I give the Preference to the Leters which come from a Learned Body, and which on this occaſion may not improperly be termed the *Plauſus Academici.* The firſt is from my Lady *Lizard*'s youngeſt Son, who (as I mentioned in a former *Precaution*) is Fellow of *All-Souls*, and applies himſelf to the Study of Divinity.

SIR,

'I Return you Thanks for your Preſent of *Cato*: 'I have read it over ſeveral times with the 'greateſt Attention and Pleaſure imaginable: You 'deſire to know my Thoughts of it, and at the 'ſame time compliment me upon my Knowledge 'of the Ancient Poets; perhaps you may not allow 'me to be a good Judge of them, when I tell you, 'that the Tragedy of *Cato* exceeds, in my Opinion, 'any of the Dramatick Pieces of the Ancients. But 'thoſe are Books I have ſome time ſince laid by, be- 'ing, as you know, engaged in the Reading of Di- 'vinity, and converſant chiefly in the Poetry of the 'truly *Inſpired Writers*. I ſcarce thought any Mo- 'dern Tragedy would have mixed ſuitably with ſuch 'ſerious Studies, and little imagined to have found 'ſuch exquiſite Poetry, much leſs ſuch exalted Sen- 'timents of Virtue in the Dramatick Performance 'of a Cotemporary.

'How elegant, juſt and virtuous is that Reflecti- 'on of *Portius*?

The Ways of Heav'n are dark and intricate,
Puzzled in Mazes, and perplext with Errors;
Our Underſtanding traces 'em in vain,
Loſt and bewilder'd in the fruitleſs Search;
Nor ſees with how much Art the Windings run,
Nor where the Regular Confuſion ends.

'*Cato*'s Soliloquy at the beginning of the fifth Act 'is inimitable, as indeed is almoſt every thing in the 'whole Play; but what I would obſerve, by parti- 'cularly pointing at theſe Places, is, that ſuch vir- 'tuous and moral Sentiments were never before 'put into the Mouth of a *Britiſh* Actor; and I con- 'gratulate my Countrymen on the Virtue they have 'ſhown in giving them (as you tell me) ſuch loud 'and repeated Applauſes. They have now cleared 'themſelves of the Imputation which a late Writer 'had thrown upon 'em in his 22d *Speculation*. Give 'me leave to tranſcribe his Words,

"In the firſt Scene of *Terence*'s Play, the *Self* "*Tormentor*, when one of the old Men accuſes the "other of Impertinence for interpoſing in his Af- "fairs, he anſwers, *I am a Man, and cannot help* "*feeling any Sorrow, that can arrive at Man.* It is "ſaid this Sentence was received with Univerſal "Applauſe. There cannot be a greater Argument "of the general good Underſtanding of a People, "than a ſudden Conſent to give their Approbation "of a Sentiment which has no Emotion in it.

"If it were ſpoken with never ſo great Skill in "the Actor, the manner of uttering that Sentence "could have nothing in it which could ſtrike any "but People of the greateſt Humanity, nay People "elegant and skillful in Obſervations upon it. It "is poſſible he might have laid his Hand on his "Breaſt, and with a winning Inſinuation in his "Countenance, expreſſed to his Neighbour, that he "was a Man who made his Caſe his own; yet I'll "engage a Player in *Covent-Garden* might hit ſuch an "Attitude a thouſand times before he would have "been regarded." Theſe Obſervations, in favour 'of the *Roman* People, may now be very juſtly 'apply'd to our own Nation.

Here will I hold. If there's a Pow'r above us,
(And that there is, all Nature cries aloud
Through all her Works) He muſt delight in Virtue;
And that which He delights in muſt be happy.

'This will be allowed, I hope, to be as virtu- 'ous a Sentiment as that which he quotes out of 'Terence; and the general Applauſe with which '(you ſay) it was receiv'd, muſt certainly make this 'Writer (notwithſtanding his great Aſſurance in 'pronouncing upon our ill Taſte) alter his Opini- 'on of his Countrymen.

'Our Poetry, I believe, and not our Morals, has 'been generally worſe than that of the *Romans*; 'for 'tis plain, when we can equal the beſt Drama- 'tick Performance of that polite Age, a *Britiſh* Au- 'dience may vie with the *Roman* Theatre in the Vir- 'tue of their Applauſes.

'How-

(Price Two Pence.)

'However different in other Things our Opinions may be, all Parties agree in doing Honour to a Man who is an Honour to our Country: How are our Hearts warmed by this excellent Tragedy with the Love of Liberty and our Conſtitution? How irreſiſtible is Virtue in the Character of *Cato*? Who wou'd not ſay with the *Numidian* Prince to *Marcia*,

I'll gaze for ever on thy Godlike Father;
Tranſplanting, one by one, into my Life
His bright Perfections, 'till I ſhine like him.

'*Rome* her ſelf received not ſo great Advantages from her Patriot, as *Britain* will from this admirable Repreſentation of him; our *Britiſh Cato* improves our Language as well as our Morals, nor will it be in the Power of Tyrants to rob us of him, (or, to uſe the laſt Line of an Epigram to the Author)

In vain your Cato *ſtabs, he cannot die.*

I am, SIR,

Your moſt Oblig'd,

Oxon. All-Souls *Col.* May 6.

Humble Servant,

William Lizard.

Oxon. Chriſt-Church, May 7.

Mr. IRONSIDE,

'YOU are, I perceive, a very wary old Fellow, more cautious than a late Brother-Writer of yours, who, at the Rehearſal of a new Play, would, at the hazard of his Judgment, endeavour to prepoſſeſs the Town in its Favour; whereas you very prudently waited till the Tragedy of *Cato* had gained an univerſal and irreſiſtible Applauſe, and then with great Boldneſs ventured to pronounce your Opinion of it to be the ſame with that of all Mankind. I'll leave you to conſider whether ſuch a Conduct becomes a *Guardian*, who ought to point out to us proper Entertainments, and inſtruct us when to beſtow our Applauſe. However, in ſo plain a Caſe, we did not wait for your Directions; and I muſt tell you, that none here were earlier or louder in their Praiſes of *Cato*, than we at *Chriſt Church*. This may, I hope, convince you, that we don't deſerve the Character (which envious dull Fellows give us) of allowing no Body to have Wit or Parts but thoſe of our own Body, eſpecially when I let you know that we are many of us

Your Affectionate,

Humble Servants.

To *Neſtor Ironſide*, Eſq;.

Mr. IRONSIDE, *Oxon. Wad.* Col. *May* 7.

'WERE the *Seat of the Muſes* ſilent, while *London* is ſo loud in their Applauſe of *Cato*, the Univerſity's Title to that Name might very well be ſuſpected;—— in Juſtice therefore to your *Alma Mater*, let the World know our Opinion of that Tragedy here.

'The Author's other Works had rais'd our Expectation of it to a very great Height, yet it exceeds whatever we could promiſe our ſelves from ſo great a Genius.

'*Caeſar* will no longer be a Hero in our Declamations: This Tragedy has at once ſtripp'd him of all the Flattery and falſe Colours, which Hiſtorians and the Claſſick Authors had thrown upon him, and we ſhall for the future treat him as a Murderer of the beſt Patriot of his Age, and a Deſtroyer of the Liberties of his Country. *Cato*, as repreſented in theſe Scenes, will caſt a blacker Shade on the Memory of that Uſurper, than the Picture of him did upon his Triumph. Had this finiſh'd Dramatick Piece appear'd ſome hundred Years ago, *Caeſar* would have loſt ſo many Centuries of Fame, and Monarchs had diſdain'd to let themſelves be call'd by his Name. However, it will be an Honour to the Times we live in, to have had ſuch a Work produc'd in them, and a pretty Speculation for Poſterity to obſerve that the Tragedy of *Cato* was acted with general Applauſe in 1713.

I am, SIR,

Your moſt humble Servant, &c.

A. B.

P. S. The *French* Tranſlation of *Cato*, now in the Preſs, will, I hope, be *in Uſum Delphini*.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

Juſt Publiſh'd,

The Fourth Edition of CATO *a Tragedy. Written by Mr. Addiſon. Printed for J. Tonſon at Shakeſpear's Head over-againſt Catherine-ſtreet in the Strand.* N. B. *There is Sold a Pyrated Edition of this Play, wherein are numberleſs groſs Faults and ſeveral Scenes left out. The Edition Publiſhed and Corrected by the Author, and Printed for J. Tonſon, has a Head of Cato taken from an old Medal, Printed in the Title Page to diſtinguiſh it from that which is Spurious and Imperfect.*

Juſt Publiſh'd, New and Correct Editions of the following Books, viz.

Dryden's Fables in one Volume, 8vo. Dryden's Juvenal and Milton's Paradiſe Regained, both in 12mo. Printed in Pocket Volumes, with an Elzever Letter, and adorned with Cuts deſigned and engraved by the beſt Hands. Sold by Jacob Tonſon at Shakeſpear's Head over againſt Catherine-ſtreet in the Strand.

To be Sold by Auction,

A Catalogue of curious Original Prints, Drawings, Books, Models, &c. being the Collection of Mr. Jacobus Welſon, late of Broadſtreet, London, Painter, Deceaſed, for the Benefit of his Children, by the Executors, at the three Chairs the corner of the Little Piazza, Covent Garden. The Sale will begin this Day at 5 a Clock in the Evening, and ſo continue till all are Sold. The Prints, Drawings, &c. are to be ſeen till the time of Sale, where Catalogues may be had gratis.

A Collection of extraordinary Pictures by ſome of the beſt Italian and other Maſters, lately brought from beyond Sea, and never expoſed to Sale before, viz. Claude Lorraine, Caliginoſa, Pietro Teſta, Viviano, Titian, Andrea Del Sarto, Rembrandt, Bott, Spanioletto, Gerrard Dow, Rotenhamer, Brughel, Sagot Levet, Deneff, Teniers, will be Sold by Auction at Mr. Gouge's late Dwelling Houſe over the Toy-ſhop in the little Piazza Covent Garden, to Morrow being Wednesday the 20th Inſtant; the Pictures may be ſeen this Day and to Morrow till the time of Sale, which will begin at 11 a Clock preciſely, and they muſt be all Sold off that Day. Catalogues may be had gratis at the Place of Sale.

LONDON: Printed for *J. Tonſon* in the *Strand*; and Sold by *A. Baldwin* in *Warwick-Lane*; where Advertiſements are taken in. 1713.